BOB JONES *University*

CONCERT, OPERA & DRAMA SERIES

PRESENTS

Commencement Concert

with

The University Symphony Orchestra

and

Combined Choirs

Dwight Gustafson, Conductor

I

Overture to RUSSLAN AND LUDMILLA .... *Michael Glinka*

Piano Concerto No. 2 in G Minor .... *Camille Saint-Saëns*

Andante sostenuto
Allegro scherzando
Presto

Mary Ann Ensminger, soloist

INTERMISSION*

II

"Miserere" from IL TROVATORE .... *Giuseppe Verdi*
Brenda Reinebach and William McCauley, soloists

Pilgrim Chorus from TANNHÄUSER .... *Richard Wagner*

Capriccio Italien .... *Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky*

III

Te Deum .... *Anton Bruckner*

Te deum laudamus
We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship Thee. . . .

Te ergo quaesumus
Therefore we entreat Thee to help Thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood. . . .

Salvum fac popululum tuum
Save Thy people, Lord, and bless Thine inheritance. . . .

In te, Domine, speravi
In Thee, Lord, have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

Gwen Gustafson, Sara Elliott, William McCauley, and Ron Billingsley
soloists

PROGRAM NOTES

As the "father of modern Russian music," Glinka preceded the "Mighty Five" and Tchaikovsky in the composition of music that was distinctively Russian. He wrote two operas, the famous *Life for the Czar* and *Russlan and Ludmilla*. The brilliant and exuberant overture to the latter is typical of Glinka's colorful orchestral palette.

The G Minor Concerto of Saint-Saëns, composed in 1868, is the first important work of a French composer for piano and orchestra. The somber opening of the Concerto reminds us that Saint-Saëns was a virtuoso on the organ as well as on the piano. Rather than the customary fast-slow-fast order of movements, Saint-Saëns puts the moderately slow movement first, followed by a Mendelssohn-like scherzo. The Finale gives the pianist a "perpetual motion" pattern throughout, "light-footed enough to test any virtuoso's dexterity."

At the beginning of the final act of Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, Leonora comes to the castle fortress of Aliaferia in desperate hope of saving the life of her lover, Manrico, who is doomed to execution. From within the castle sounds the chanting of monks singing the "miserere," imploring God to have mercy on the soul of him who is about to perish, while from the prison tower sounds the voice of the condemned Manrico.

In the concluding act of *Tannhauser,* Wagner wrote one of his most memorable operatic choruses. Pilgrims returning from a journey of penance to Rome express happiness at the welcome sight of their homeland and sing praise to God.

When he visited Rome in 1880, Tchaikovsky stayed in a hotel next door to the barracks of a regiment of the Italian cavalry, and their bugle calls found their way into the opening fanfare of this Italian Capriccio. The simple, folklike melodies of the work, including a spirited tarantella near the end, while ostensibly Italian in origin, are nonetheless treated in the unmistakable Russian style which Tchaikovsky inherited from Glinka.

When Bruckner's young champion, Mahler, conducted this *Te Deum* in 1892, he expressed his admiration for the work in an unusual way. Crossing out the words "for chorus, solo voices and orchestra, organ *ad lib.*" from the title page, he substituted "for angelic tongues, God-seekers, tormented hearts, and souls purified in flames." One of Bruckner's own favorites, his *Te Deum* was by coincidence the last of any of his works he was privileged to hear. One of the greatest of hymns, the *Te Deum* is regularly sung to this day. Since its origin in the fourth century, this magnificent text of praise has been set to music by many outstanding composers, including Handel, Berlioz, Dvorak, and Verdi.

Program notes by A. Duane White

FOUNDER'S MEMORIAL AMPHITORIUM
May 23, 1981
8:00 P.M.

*Chimes will sound and lobby lights will flash three minutes before the end of intermission.

Recording equipment and cameras are not permitted in the Amphitorium during any performance.